



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: May 4, 2016

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(f): Consideration of resolution authorizing application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a Proposition 1 grant to acquire a Laurel Canyon spring parcel, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing application to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a Proposition 1 grant to acquire a Laurel Canyon spring parcel in the amount not to exceed \$595,000.

Background: The proposed grant application would be targeted at acquiring APN 5565-003-041 (approximately 0.97 acres) that the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has currently under option. This parcel is part of six parcels at the southwest corner of Mulholland Drive and Laurel Canyon Boulevard that the MRCA has had under option since 2007 and has slowly been acquiring free of interest accrual. The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks acquired the largest parcel at the street intersection. The MRCA now owns two additional parcels in fee simple and has conservation easements on unbuildable portions APNs 5565-003-039, 5565-003-040, and 5565-003-041. The time table to complete the remaining three acquisitions is approximately seven years using MRCA Community Facilities District No. 1 funding in a small increment annually.

The subject parcels are important for east-west wildlife movement between the Laurel and Nichols Canyon watersheds leading towards Griffith Park. They represent the eastern end of the multi-hundred-acre Wilacre-Fryman-Elrita Bowl core habitat area. They provide a broad interface along Laurel Canyon Boulevard for wildlife crossing.

The primary focus for a Proposition 1 grant is to acquire APN 5565-003-041 as soon as possible because it provides a year-round water source for wildlife. The parcel is located at the terminus of a USGS blueline stream that was dramatically altered in the early 1960s. It represents a prime opportunity to acquire the spring ahead of

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schedule and allow for its rehabilitation. The rehabilitation would be funded with riparian mitigation funds. The grant would also accelerate completion of the whole Laurel and Mulholland acquisition program.

The proposed grant would be combined with CFD funds to acquire APN 5565-003-041 in February 2018.

The property is already used for unsanctioned public access and has unofficial trails. It can be reached from the MTA bus stop at the corner of Laurel Canyon Boulevard and Mulholland Drive. A paved fee simple portion of APN 5565-003-041 also extends to the intersection of Laurel Canyon Boulevard and Amor Road. The Laurel - Mulholland project is a multi-benefit project. APN 5565-003-041 fits well with the Conservancy's Proposition 1 grant criteria and provides a major element for the eastern Santa Monica Mountains wildlife corridor and Mulholland Scenic Parkway.